

23 October 1989

Dear David,

Sorry for the long silence. In September I didn't write because I was arranging your possible visit in Poland and I was waiting till I could give you some concrete news. I was going to write immediately after our return from Vienna but I was having a very difficult time then. Two days after our return my grandfather died which was a shock for me because I was very attached to him. He was very old (95) and weak but I didn't think it would happen so soon. I am glad that at least I could spend the last evening with him, I helped my grandmother to put him to bed; he died several hours later in his sleep, a very luxurious death. It was Saturday, and then on Sunday Marcia got bitten by a dog and Chris bursted his leg so unfortunately that he couldn't walk for quite a while. All this just proved the idea that misfortunes never come singly. Only now am I recovering from all the depression and exhaustion and have some time to finally write the letter that I have been writing in my mind for six weeks.

It would be wonderful if you could come to Poland. I already have our director's approval and we applied to the rector for the funds. I hope it's a mere formality. We also need to apply to the Ministry of Education because up to now visitors from

the USA and West Germany (those terrible imperialist countries!) needed a special permission to lecture at Polish universities (it was usually a formality but delayed the process). Most probably the new minister will cancel this rule but he needs some time to cope with all the foolishness of the former period. Anyway, I tried to give such information as the date and place of your birth. Tell me whether it's correct: Montreal, 2 March, 1949? I deduced it from my memories + the information in your book, but I might be wrong.

Since the Pesach is in the first part of April, maybe you could come in March or second ^{part} ~~first~~ of April. March would be better ^{for the university} because we'll have less visitors then, but, on the other hand, April is much nicer and Poland looks less drab then. In the application I mentioned 10 days stay because you would probably not like to leave your family for more than this. During this time you could work 2-3 lectures at our Department (English) and the Polish Dept. Since ours is the English Dept. it would be better if you could lecture on Singer, or if possibly Jewish American Writers, in the Polish Dept. you could speak on Yiddish lit, or some relations between Polish and Yiddish lit, or Holocaust literature etc. I also called Steinschaw

Knejewski and he will try to arrange a lecture @
for you in Warsaw as soon as I know when
you are coming, I'll call my friends in Lucan
and they'll arrange something for you there.
At the Jagielloonian University they are keeping
a 2-year programme of Jewish Studies and
they should be most interested in your visit.
During the rest of your visit you would be
as free as a bird and you could see whatever
you want. I hope you would stay most of the
time in Lublin and the Lublin area. I've just
learnt from my grandmother how to make
the gefilte fish (old recipe that she got just after
the first world war from her Jewish friend)
and you must come to check whether it is as it
should be (assuming that fish will be available
then; as you know, one never knows in Poland).
During your stay in Poland the university will
supply you with accommodation and spending
money + money for your lectures. They cannot
cover your travel expenses. I hope the seminary
will cover it. By the end of the year you
should receive the official invitation
that will be helpful at the Polish Embassy -
when you show it while applying for
the Polish visa they'll relieve you from
exchanging \$15 a day (obligatory for regular

tourists; that's the regulation now, but it might be changed too, everything is changing in Poland now). Please, write as soon as possible whether you've decided to come and what would be the best time ^{for} you. As I said, all these arrangements ^{are} and 98% sure, it will just take some time to deal with the formalities.

It would be wonderful if you come, because next summer we might go to Canada for 2-3 years and the whole thing would be terribly delayed.

Thanks a lot for your article (I'll read it soon) and the proofreads. I hope the publishers ^{will} send me some offprints. The article on "Dybbuk" was very interesting. I regret I can't participate in the festival. I left half of my heart in New York and I miss it a lot, for me New York means Jewish New York first of all.

Don't send me a copy of "Joseph and Clove" but it's so nice that you thought about it. I have a copy and just before receiving your letter I translated it into Polish. Coincidence isn't it? It's an extraordinary story, equally exotic for Polish, Jewish & American readers. Instead of sending you a photo of my street, I have just sent you a photo album about Lublin, so that you could have a better idea of the place where Yasha Marcus lived and where you might

Thanks again for all your help!

(3) come in not too distant future. The album is not the nicest but it was the only one available in bookstores. Some pictures are dated, e.g. the Piłsudski's monument (one of the ugliest sculptures I've ever seen, Piłsudski was the infamous president of Poland after World War II) is no longer there. Some streets have regained their old names and there are a number of plaques commemorating some Jewish buildings. The album is in Polish but it has an index of photographs in English. From my experience I know that books sent from Poland reach the States much later than letter but I hope you'll receive it before you come.

Please, give our love to Shona and wish her the best health. I hope your plans of having another baby will work out. We would also like to have one but I had a very difficult and complicated pregnancy and I'm still afraid to take another risk. We'll see. Maybe Aryeh and Elanora will have baby sisters or brothers, maybe not. Hopefully, we'll manage not to spoil them. On the other hand, I know myself that it's hard to be the only child, even when you are not

a child any longer. E.g. I know how difficult
it's for my parents ^{to} part with us
for a longer time. If I had a brother
or sister it would be much easier to cope
with.

The Carmelite order affair made me very unhappy
and angry. I never liked Glenn but now he made
me furious. I wrote three letters to different papers
in reference to his speech. Fragments of one of
them were published. His speech was a shock for
most of us and he lost a lot of his popularity.
Zachary Baker sent me numerous photocopies of
articles from Jewish American & Jewish British
press so I was well informed.

Professor Shmenk is already in Poland and I hope
he'll come to Lublin in spite of his busy schedule.
The tour he was going to lead in September
didn't work out because the main organizer
died.

The changes in Poland are incredible
but the everyday life is quite hard.
However, people complain less because
they realize that the present government
can't cure in one week the disease
that has lasted since the forties.

lots of love to all three
of you

Folie Core

Flourish